



**New PASSAGES** Behavioral Health & Rehabilitation Services

A non-profit organization

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**February 27, 2006**

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**House of Representatives Leon Drolet, Chair  
Government Operations Committee  
FAX: 517-373-5974**

**Re Senate Bills 1026-1030  
House Bills 5744-5745**

**Dear Representative Drolet:**

We need your support of legislation that is very important to us and 5,000 other licensee statewide. It is our understanding that the House Committee on Government Operations is considering Senate Bills 1026-1030 and House Bills 5744-5745 this week. These bills amend the Adult Foster Care Facility Licensing Act, Public Health Code, Mental Health Code, Administrative Procedures Act and Social Welfare Act. The enactment of these statutory amendments is essential to us. Without them, we could be subject to burdensome and unreasonable administrative rules.

By way of background, we operate licensed adult foster care homes serving persons with development disabilities. We provide 24-hours personal care, supervision and protection for some of the most vulnerable adults in the community. Last summer, the Departments of Human Services and Community Health proposed extensive changes to our licensing rules. We strongly oppose many of these proposed changes. We have voiced our concerns and our issues have not been satisfactorily addressed by the respective state agencies.

Without this legislation, our limited resources will be wrongfully diverted away from direct consumer supports and services. We will have to shift our resources towards burdensome administrative tasks because our staff are not organized by a labor union. We think this is unreasonable. We feel that our state licensing rules should be neutral as to union status. State licensing rules should not favor or punish licensees based on the union status of its workers.

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NewPASSAGES corporate mission is to provide the best behavioral health and rehabilitation services. Our goal is to promote independence and community integration while maximizing the individual's quality of life.



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Page two

Please be assured that these bills are not intended to negate workers' rights under the Fair Labor Standards Act, National Labor Relations Act or any other state or federal laws governing workers' rights. The bills do not condone unfair labor practices and do not limit employees' rights to seek all of the traditional remedies for such unlawful practices. The bills simply remove union status and employee wages and fringe benefits from the administrative rules governing adult foster care homes. All other laws remain in full effect.

We ask that you support these bills that protect us and the 50,000 consumers living in licensed settings statewide. In supporting these bills, you will help enable the Michigan Departments of Human Services and Community Health to maintain their focus on consumer protection and not labor relations. In our view, labor relations should be left to the traditional state and federal agencies that have the experience and statutory authority to act to perform these functions.

We urge you to support these Senate and House Bills and welcome your questions. Also, please confirm for us as to when these bills will be taken up by the full House and Senate. We would like to travel to Lansing and be present to hear the discussion and the respective votes.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Dennis R. Jacobs, Ph.D.,  
President/Chief Executive Officer  
New Passages Behavioral Health & Rehabilitation Services